

Standard USG-4: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the United States' relations with other nation-states and its role in world affairs.

USG-4.1 Summarize ways in which United States foreign policy is formulated and carried out, including current foreign policy issues and security interests; the impact of foreign policy on individual citizens; the influence and exchange of political ideas between nations; and America's contributions to the world in politics, environmentalism, technology, science, humanitarianism, and culture. (P, E, G)

Taxonomy Level: 2.4-B Understand Conceptual Knowledge

Previous/future knowledge:

There will have been insignificant previous knowledge of this indicator. Students will have studied instances of U.S. foreign policy but will have no detailed knowledge of current foreign policy issues or the decision-making apparatus for creating and implementing foreign policy. (5-6.1; 5-6.5; 5-6.6; 7-7.1; 7-7.3; GS 6.4; USHC 10.1)

It is essential for students to know that the formulation of foreign policy resides primarily with the executive branch and the president, though the limited role of Congress should also be examined. An explanation of the roles of the major foreign policy agencies/departments should be detailed. This explanation should include the Department of State, the NSA, the CIA, and the Department of Defense. Students should recognize the prominent roles of ideology, trade (economics), and security issues in driving foreign policy and that foreign policy operates in both a formal and informal sphere. There should be a focus on contemporary issues concerning the U.S. in international relations. An emphasis should be placed on American values such as justice, rule of law, popular sovereignty, basic human rights, etc., which have had, and continue to have, a large influence on the international community. There should be a recognition that foreign policy traditionally has had little interest among the populace, with the obvious exception of war, and operates with little acknowledgement or oversight from the American people.

It is not essential for students to know the current policy/relationship with any given nation. Nor do students have to know the persons currently heading the various departments, agencies, or committees. There is no need to know the details and any particular treaty or executive agreement.

Assessment guidelines: The objective of this indicator is to summarize the formulation and execution of U.S. foreign policy. Assessment should require students to explain why foreign policy is primarily an executive function and to describe the creation of policy in contemporary international issues. Appropriate assessment would call upon students to analyze and debate the impact of American foreign policy in contributing to the expression of democratic ideals around the world.